

Dauphin County Bar Association Nonprofit Initiative Fact Sheet

The Dauphin County Bar Association Nonprofit Initiative will refer eligible nonprofit and community-based organizations to pro bono counsel. The Nonprofit Initiative is part of the Pro Bono Program of the Dauphin County Bar Association.

The Nonprofit Initiative is designed to provide assistance to Dauphin County nonprofit organizations that meet the following criteria:

- Have a charitable or community purpose,
- Have a three-year track record of operations, and
- Need free legal assistance to avoid impairing their programs and/or help further their mission and programming.

Organizations that serve low-income communities, are involved in community economic development, or serve low-income, indigent, or disadvantaged persons will receive priority. The Nonprofit Initiative Steering Committee retains complete discretion as to which matters it accepts.

Requests for help regarding a specific legal problem and requests for more general or ongoing assistance will both be considered. The Nonprofit Initiative will assist community-based organizations with the full range of commercial legal needs, including: employment law, taxation, charitable registration and other regulatory compliance issues, real estate, leases, business contracts, financial law, reorganization, insurance law, zoning, etc.

The Nonprofit Initiative can not assist any organizations with requests for representation related to any partisan political activity or any activity that might put the Dauphin County Bar Association's tax-exempt status at risk.

The formation of long-term partnerships between community-based organizations and attorneys will be encouraged. Through these partnerships, the attorneys and their firms can bring all their resources and expertise to assist their client organizations. This allows law firms, in particular, to participate in the larger community. It provides a unique opportunity for transactional attorneys to assist in community development, to develop relationships with organizations that help our community, and to gain valuable transactional experience.

The Steering Committee will screen potential client organizations in order to find organizations that have commercial legal needs, that will be reliable partners in such client/attorney relationships, and that are providing needed services to the community. If a long-term partnership is appropriate, the parties will define the terms and length of their relationship. Thereafter, the Steering Committee will evaluate how the relationship develops on a regular basis and will be available to facilitate communication and an effective relationship between the organization and their counsel.

If you have any questions regarding the Nonprofit Initiative, please contact Sandy Ballard, Dauphin County Bar Association Public Services Coordinator, at 232-7536, or through email at sandy@dcba-pa.org.